And you want me to give you
a mandatory vote
because we are both Black
and descendants of oppression?
What will I get in return?
Hush money from the recreation fund?
A kilo of cocaine?
A boy for my bed
and a bimbo for my arm?
A tax break on my new home
west of the ghetto?

You promised
this would be a nigga fantasy
on the scale of Oz.
Instead, it's "Birth of a Nation"
and the only difference
is the white men
are played in Blackface.

At the end of heavy breathing
as the pickaninny frenzy escalates,
the home crew is illin'
on freak drugs
and afflicted racial pride.
The toll beyond counting,
the shimmering carcasses
all smell the same.
No matter which way
the wind blows
I lose a god
or a friend.

My grieving is too common
to arouse the glance of angels.
My shame is too easy to pick up

like a freak from the park
and go.

Urged to honor paranoia,
trained to trust a dream,
a reverend, hocus-pocus
handshakes; I risk becoming schizoid
shuffling between Black English
and assimilation.
My dreamscape is littered
with effigies of my heroes.
I journey across
my field of vision
raiding the tundra
of my imagination.
Three African rooftops
are aflame in my hand.
Compelled by desperation,
I plunder every bit of love
in my possession.
I am looking for an answer
to drugs and corruption.
I enter the diminishing
circumstance of prayer.
Inside a homemade Baptist church
perched on the edge
of the voodoo ghetto,
the murmurs of believers
rise and fall, exhaled
from a single spotted lung.
The congregation sings
to an out-of-tune piano
while death is rioting,
splashing blood about
like gasoline,
offering pieces of rock